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## **Economic and Social Drivers of Imported Halal Skincare Purchases Among Urban Generation Z Consumers**

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### ***Abstract :***

*The purpose of this study is to examine the influence of brand image, price, brand trust, attitude, and religiosity on the purchase decision of imported halal skincare products. This research employs descriptive analysis and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Data were collected through questionnaires filled out by Generation Z consumers of imported halal skincare products in Pekanbaru city, with a sample size of 96 respondents determined using the Lemeshow formula. The results show that brand image has a positive and significant effect on behavioral intention. Price has a positive but not significant effect on behavioral intention. Brand trust has a positive and significant effect on behavioral intention. Attitude and religiosity have no significant effect on behavioral intention. Behavioral intention has a positive and significant effect on use behavior.*

**Keywords:** *Brand Image, Price, Brand Trust, Attitude, Religiosity, Behavioral Intention, Use Behavior*

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## **1. Introduction**

Generation Z is recognized as a cohort with high sensitivity to trends, especially in consumer products. This generation is highly responsive to the dynamic movements of trending products in the market, particularly in the cosmetic and skincare sectors (Handriana, Azzahra, & Yuliati, 2021; Pertiwi, Novitasari, & Salam, 2024). The advent of globalization has made it easier for foreign products to penetrate domestic markets, resulting in a wider variety of products and brands available for consumers, especially among Generation Z (Maulani, Nuryakin, & Saad, 2024; Nurcahyo & Saraswati, 2023). This abundance of choice places pressure on companies to continuously innovate to maintain competitive advantage and capture market share (Kusumawardhani & Sari, 2023; Ramadhani & Dewi, 2024).

In the Indonesian context, imported skincare products have shown a strong growth trend, even surpassing local brands in sales and market share, as demonstrated in recent market reports (Fauziah, Syarifah, & Hidayatullah, 2024; Wijanarko &

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Muttaqin, 2023). The increasing popularity of imported halal skincare products, in particular, reflects a significant shift in consumer preferences driven by quality, brand image, and religious considerations (Afendi & Indriani, 2022; Hasbullah, Masood, & Rahim, 2024). The presence of halal certification has become an important attribute influencing consumer trust and purchase intention, especially in a majority Muslim country like Indonesia (Amalia & Rozza, 2022; Pratiwi & Kurniawan, 2022).

Despite the proliferation of halal products, many domestic cosmetic brands still struggle to incorporate halal certification as a key selling point, which could explain the stronger market performance of imported halal skincare products (Dharmapatni, Riani, & Wijaya, 2024; Yuliana & Maulina, 2023). This creates a competitive gap and opens opportunities for imported brands to capture a loyal consumer base among religiously conscious young consumers (Rahman & Firdaus, 2021; Najib & Haryanto, 2022). However, there remains a lack of detailed research on how specific factors such as brand image, price, brand trust, attitude, and religiosity influence the purchasing behavior of Generation Z consumers toward imported halal skincare products.

The existing literature highlights various determinants of halal cosmetic product consumption, yet few studies comprehensively analyze the combined effect of these factors on behavioral intention and actual usage behavior among Generation Z in urban settings (Riani & Putra, 2022; Putri & Wulandari, 2023). Furthermore, most research tends to focus on millennials broadly or on local products, leaving a gap in understanding the nuances of imported halal skincare preferences among the younger generation (Nuryakin, Saad, & Maulani, 2024; Kusumawardhani & Sari, 2023). This research gap necessitates a focused study that addresses the interplay of economic, psychological, and religious variables influencing Gen Z consumers.

The novelty of this study lies in its integrative approach to examine multiple predictors of purchase behavior—brand image, price, brand trust, attitude, and religiosity—and their direct and indirect effects on behavioral intention and use behavior of imported halal skincare products (Pertiwi, Novitasari, & Salam, 2024; Fauziah et al., 2024). Unlike previous research that often isolates these factors, this study uses Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to analyze their relationships comprehensively in the context of urban Indonesian Gen Z consumers, providing actionable insights for marketers and policymakers.

The urgency of this study is underscored by the rapid growth of the halal cosmetics market globally and locally, coupled with increasing competition and consumer sophistication (Handriana et al., 2021; Maulani et al., 2024). Understanding the behavioral drivers among Generation Z—a demographic that will dominate consumer markets in the coming years—is critical for businesses aiming to sustain growth and for regulators to ensure product standards and consumer protection (Hasbullah et al., 2024; Ramadhani & Dewi, 2024).

The purpose of this study is to analyze and explain the influence of brand image, price, brand trust, attitude, and religiosity on the behavioral intention of Generation Z

consumers toward imported halal skincare products, as well as to examine the effect of behavioral intention on actual use behavior.

## **2. Theoretical Background**

### **Brand Image**

Brand image refers to the overall perception that individuals have of a brand, shaped by past experiences and available information. This perception includes individual beliefs and preferences toward a specific brand, forming a mental association when encountering a product. In the context of halal cosmetics, brand image plays a significant role in influencing purchase decisions, particularly among Generation Z consumers who are attentive to brand values and religious alignment (Adiba & Wulandari, 2022; Najib & Haryanto, 2022). A strong brand image contributes to trust and loyalty, differentiating one brand from another in a competitive halal market (Handriana et al., 2021).

### **Price**

Price is the monetary amount that consumers must pay to acquire a product and serves as an indicator of its perceived value. Among Generation Z, price is often evaluated in relation to product benefits and religious suitability, especially when choosing halal cosmetics (Wijanarko & Muttaqin, 2023). While affordability remains essential, perceived quality and alignment with personal values can justify a higher price point. As shown in studies, price sensitivity among Gen Z is balanced by their concern for halal authenticity and brand trust (Afendi & Indriani, 2022; Yuliana & Maulina, 2023).

### **Brand Trust**

Brand trust reflects the consumer's confidence in a product or brand, developed through consistent and positive experiences. Trust is critical in halal cosmetic purchases, as Gen Z consumers prefer brands that are transparent and consistently deliver on halal claims (Pratiwi & Kurniawan, 2022). Trust also correlates with increased purchase intention, particularly when consumers believe that a brand adheres to religious and ethical standards (Nurcahyo & Saraswati, 2023; Putri & Wulandari, 2023). As trust grows, it strengthens loyalty and supports repeat purchasing behavior.

**Attitude**

Attitude encompasses an individual's overall favorable or unfavorable evaluation toward a behavior or object. In halal cosmetic consumption, attitudes are shaped by personal beliefs, perceived benefits, and social influence. A positive attitude toward halal products significantly increases the likelihood of purchase intention and actual use behavior (Riani & Putra, 2022; Amalia & Rozza, 2022). For Generation Z, who are digitally connected and value both appearance and values, attitude is often informed by peer recommendations, online reviews, and brand messaging (Kusumawardhani & Sari, 2023).

**Religiosity**

Religiosity refers to the degree of an individual's commitment to religious beliefs and practices, which strongly influence consumer behavior in Muslim-majority societies like Indonesia. It plays a central role in shaping preferences and decisions regarding halal cosmetics, with highly religious individuals demonstrating a stronger preference for products that align with Islamic values (Hasbullah et al., 2024; Rahman & Firdaus, 2021). Religiosity also fosters emotional connections to products perceived as morally and spiritually appropriate, increasing both intention and loyalty (Pertiwi et al., 2024; Maulani et al., 2024).

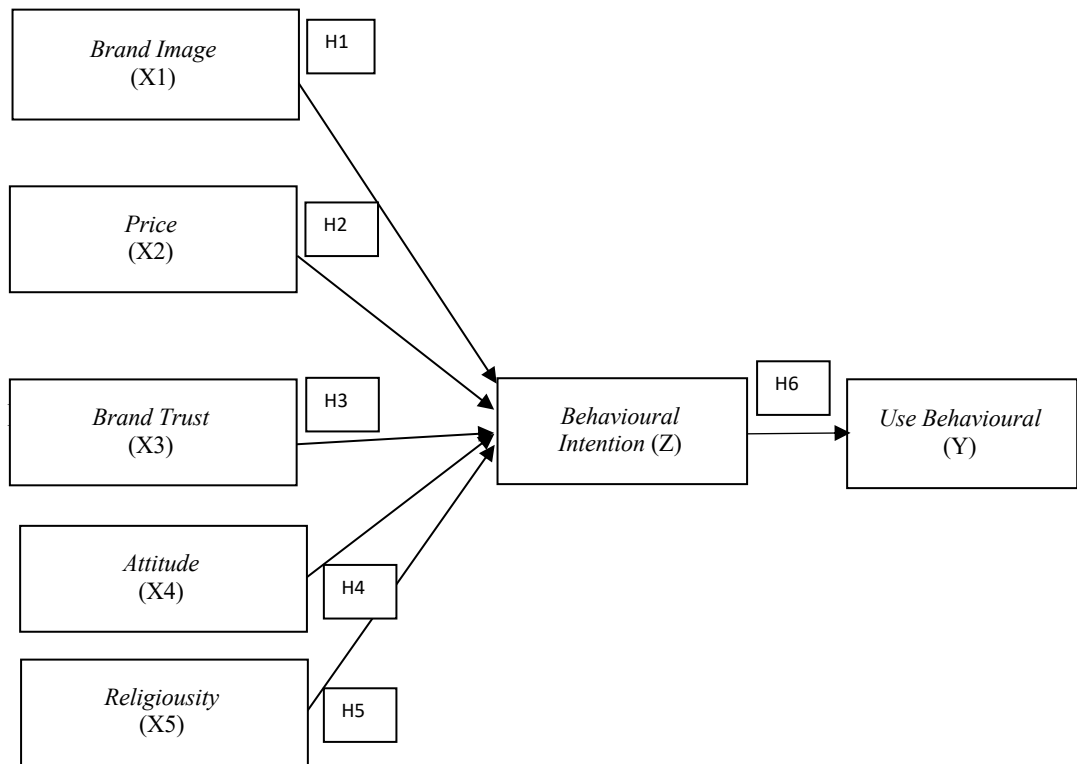
**Behavioral Intention**

Behavioral intention reflects a consumer's readiness to perform a behavior, such as purchasing a halal cosmetic product. Among Generation Z, intention is influenced by halal awareness, trust, and religiosity, all of which contribute to decision-making processes (Fauziah et al., 2024; Ramadhani & Dewi, 2024). Strong behavioral intention is often a precursor to actual purchasing behavior, particularly when reinforced by positive attitudes and favorable brand evaluations (Dharmapatni et al., 2024).

**Use Behavior**

Use behavior refers to the actual actions of consumers in utilizing a product, influenced by prior intentions and contextual factors. For halal cosmetic consumers in Gen Z, this behavior reflects conscious choices shaped by personal values, peer influence, and digital engagement (Nuryakin et al., 2024). Studies show that when intention is high, particularly among those with strong religiosity and trust in the product, actual usage behavior follows consistently (Adiba & Wulandari, 2022; Handriana et al., 2021).

## Conceptual Framework and Hypothesis



Based on the theoretical framework and relevant literature discussed in the previous section, this study aims to examine the factors influencing the purchasing behavior of halal cosmetic products among Generation Z consumers. The research model focuses on key variables such as brand image, price, brand trust, attitude, and religiosity, and their influence on behavioral intention, which in turn is expected to affect actual use behavior. Accordingly, the hypotheses proposed in this study are as follows:

- H1: It is hypothesized that Brand Image has a significant effect on Behavioral Intention.
- H2: It is hypothesized that Price has a significant effect on Behavioral Intention.
- H3: It is hypothesized that Brand Trust has a significant effect on Behavioral Intention.
- H4: It is hypothesized that Attitude has a significant effect on Behavioral Intention.
- H5: It is hypothesized that Religiosity has a significant effect on Behavioral Intention.

H6: It is hypothesized that Behavioral Intention has a significant effect on Use Behavior.

### 3. Methodology

This study employs a **quantitative descriptive approach** grounded in the positivist paradigm. The quantitative method is used to explore a defined population and sample, where data is collected using structured instruments and analyzed statistically to test the proposed hypotheses. The target population in this study comprises consumers who purchase imported halal skincare products in Pekanbaru City. Sampling was determined using a statistical formula, not limited to the Lemeshow formula, with a confidence level of 95% ( $Z = 1.96$ ), estimated proportion ( $P = 0.5$ ), and a 10% margin of error ( $e = 0.10$ ). Based on the calculation, the minimum sample size required is **96 respondents**.

The sample represents consumers who are familiar with and have purchased imported halal skincare products. The sampling design is intended to ensure sufficient statistical power for model testing using Structural Equation Modeling with SmartPLS 4. Each variable in the model is measured using several indicators and a 5-point Likert scale. The variables include Brand Image, Price, Brand Trust, Attitude, Religiosity, Behavioral Intention, and Use Behavior—each operationalized based on established dimensions and literature references.

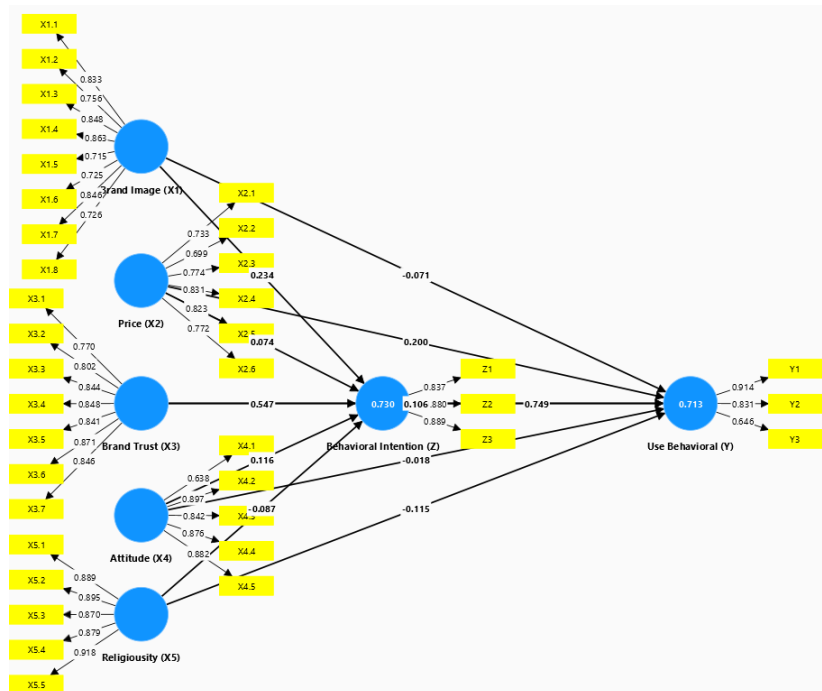
To ensure the validity and reliability of the instrument, the outer model was tested through convergent validity (loading factors  $> 0.50$ ), discriminant validity ( $AVE > 0.50$ ), and reliability tests (Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability  $> 0.70$ ). Subsequently, the inner model was evaluated using R-square, F-square, and hypothesis testing through path coefficients and p-values. These tests are essential for confirming the significance and strength of relationships between the latent variables within the proposed model.

### 4. Empirical Findings/Results

#### Measurement Model Testing (Outer Model)

##### Convergent Validity

Convergent validity is used to ensure that each indicator is acceptable and capable of explaining its corresponding latent variable. An outer loading value of 0.50 or higher is considered to have sufficiently strong validity. Based on the SmartPLS 4 output in Figure 1, the outer loading values for all indicators exceed 0.5, indicating that all indicators are valid and appropriate for measuring their respective latent constructs.



**Figure 1. Outer Model**  
Source: Data Processed by SEM PLS (2025)

### Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity is used to determine whether an indicator for a specific latent variable is distinct from indicators of other latent variables. An indicator is deemed valid for explaining its construct if the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value is greater than 0.5. According to the table 1, all AVE values for the variables are above 0.50, indicating that each construct is valid and well differentiated from others.

**Table 1. Construct Reliability and Validity – Overview**

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (rho_A)	Composite Reliability (rho_C)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Attitude (X4)	0.886	0.906	0.918	0.693
Behavioral Intention (Z)	0.838	0.839	0.902	0.755
Brand Image (X1)	0.914	0.919	0.930	0.626
Brand Trust (X3)	0.926	0.926	0.940	0.693
Price (X2)	0.865	0.874	0.899	0.598
Religiosity (X5)	0.935	0.937	0.950	0.790
Use Behavioral (Y)	0.726	0.800	0.844	0.648

Source: Data Processed by SEM PLS (2025)

### Reliability Test

Data is considered reliable if Cronbach's Alpha values exceed 0.70 and Composite Reliability (rho\_A) values are also greater than 0.70 (Vinzi, Trinchera, & Amato, 2010). Reliability is assessed through both of these measures. The results in table 1

show that all variables have Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values above 0.70, indicating that all constructs in this study are reliable.

### Structural Model Testing (Inner Model)

#### R Square

The structural model was evaluated through three key analyses: R-Square, F-Square, and hypothesis testing. The **R-Square test** (Table 2) measures the proportion of variance in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variables. Based on the output, the R-Square value for Path Model I is 0.730, indicating that the variables Brand Image (X1), Price (X2), Brand Trust (X3), Attitude (X4), and Religiosity (X5) collectively explain 73% of the variance in Behavioral Intention (Z), which is categorized as a moderate level of explanatory power. Meanwhile, the R-Square value for Path Model II is 0.713, suggesting that the same independent variables through the mediating variable Z explain 71.3% of the variance in Use Behavior (Y), also indicating a moderate level of explanation.

**Table 2. R Square**

Variable	R-Square	R-Square Adjusted
Behavioral Intention (Z)	0.730	0.715
Use Behavioral (Y)	0.713	0.694

Source: Data Processed by SEM PLS (2025)

#### F Square

The F-Square test evaluates the effect size of each exogenous construct on the endogenous constructs. Following Cohen's (1988) guidelines, an F-Square value of 0.02 is considered small, 0.15 medium, and 0.35 large. The results show that Brand Image (X1) has a small effect on Behavioral Intention (Z) with an F-Square of 0.038, Price (X2) has a small effect (0.004), Brand Trust (X3) shows a medium effect (0.153), Attitude (X4) has a small effect (0.005), and Religiosity (X5) also has a small effect (0.004). Notably, Behavioral Intention (Z) has a strong effect on Use Behavior (Y) with an F-Square value of 0.527, indicating a large impact.

**Table 3. F Test**

Variable	F-Square
Attitude (X4) → Behavioral Intention (Z)	0.005
Attitude (X4) → Use Behavioral (Y)	0.000
Behavioral Intention (Z) → Use Behavioral (Y)	0.527
Brand Image (X1) → Behavioral Intention (Z)	0.038
Brand Image (X1) → Use Behavioral (Y)	0.003
Brand Trust (X3) → Behavioral Intention (Z)	0.153
Brand Trust (X3) → Use Behavioral (Y)	0.005
Price (X2) → Behavioral Intention (Z)	0.004
Price (X2) → Use Behavioral (Y)	0.024
Religiosity (X5) → Behavioral Intention (Z)	0.004
Religiosity (X5) → Use Behavioral (Y)	0.006

Source: Data Processed by SEM PLS (2025)



## Hypothesis Test

The hypothesis testing was conducted to assess the direct significance of the relationships among variables using the P-Value criteria, where a value below 0.05 indicates statistical significance. The findings in table 4 indicate that Brand Image (X1), Price (X2), and Attitude (X4) each have a positive but statistically insignificant effect on Behavioral Intention (Z), suggesting no meaningful influence. Religiosity (X5) even shows a negative but still insignificant effect on Z. In contrast, Brand Trust (X3) demonstrates a positive and significant effect on Behavioral Intention (Z), implying a statistically meaningful relationship. Furthermore, Behavioral Intention (Z) significantly and positively affects Use Behavior (Y), confirming its key role as a determinant of usage behavior.

**Table 3. Hypothesis Test**

Hypothesis	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics	P Values
Attitude (X4) -> Behavioral Intention (Z)	0.116	0.125	0.179	0.648	0.517
Attitude (X4) -> Use Behavioral (Y)	-0.018	0.006	0.184	-0.098	0.922
Behavioral Intention (Z) -> Use Behavioral (Y)	0.749	0.747	0.131	5.727	0.000
Brand image (X1) -> Behavioral Intention (Z)	0.234	0.240	0.161	1.450	0.147
Brand image (X1) -> Use Behavioral (Y)	-0.071	-0.071	0.177	0.404	0.686
Brand Trust (X3) -> Behavioral Intention (Z)	0.547	0.533	0.184	2.971	0.003
Brand Trust (X3) -> Use Behavioral (Y)	0.106	0.118	0.184	0.577	0.564
Price (X2) -> Behavioral Intention (Z)	0.074	0.075	0.129	0.572	0.567
Price (X2) -> Use Behavioral (Y)	0.200	0.199	0.149	1.341	0.180
Religiously (X5) -> Behavioral Intention (Z)	-0.087	-0.089	0.205	0.423	0.672
Religiously (X5) -> Use Behavioral (Y)	-0.115	-0.143	0.164	0.700	0.484

Source: Data Processed by SEM PLS (2025)

## 5. Discussion

The results of this study indicate that **brand image does not significantly influence behavioral intention** among Generation Z consumers. Although prior literature emphasizes that Gen Z tends to favor brands with a strong reputation and ethical alignment (Adiba & Wulandari, 2022; Kusumawardhani & Sari, 2023), this study suggests that a positive brand image alone may not be sufficient to shape their purchasing intentions toward imported halal skincare. Despite frequent exposure to

social media promotions and testimonials that enhance brand visibility, Gen Z may weigh other factors more heavily when forming their intention to purchase (Maulani, Nuryakin, & Saad, 2024).

Similarly, **price was also found to have no significant effect on behavioral intention**, suggesting that affordability is not a primary concern for Gen Z in this product category. This supports findings by Rahman and Firdaus (2021) that highlight how value perception and product benefits may override price sensitivity in halal skincare consumption.

In contrast, **brand trust significantly influences behavioral intention**, indicating that credibility and reliability are crucial in driving Gen Z's interest in halal skincare. This finding aligns with Pratiwi and Kurniawan (2022) and Nurcahyo and Saraswati (2023), who highlight trust as a key determinant of Gen Z's brand loyalty and willingness to engage in repeat purchases. Establishing emotional security through consistent quality and transparent branding strengthens intention to buy.

Interestingly, **attitude was found to have no significant influence on behavioral intention**. Generation Z may prioritize functional product outcomes—such as efficacy—over personal sentiments or subjective evaluations (Riani & Putra, 2022). Their attitudes are often dynamic, shaped by real-time reviews and peer recommendations, which may reduce the stability of attitude as a predictor of intention.

Furthermore, **religiosity does not appear to significantly impact behavioral intention**, suggesting that while Gen Z values religious identity, it may not be a dominant factor in practical product choices such as skincare (Amalia & Rozza, 2022; Hasbullah, Masood, & Rahim, 2024). Many Gen Z consumers focus more on product effectiveness and contemporary trends rather than religious motivations when deciding to purchase halal skincare (Putri & Wulandari, 2023).

On the other hand, **behavioral intention has a strong and significant influence on actual use behavior**, demonstrating that when Gen Z forms a clear intention to buy halal skincare, it is likely to translate into real purchasing action. Influenced by digital content, online reviews, and social media influencers, their strong intentions are often catalyzed by perceived relevance to trends, expectations of product quality, and peer validation (Dharmapatni, Riani, & Wijaya, 2024; Ramadhani & Dewi, 2024). This reflects a pattern where behavioral intention becomes the gateway through which marketing stimuli convert into actual consumer behavior.

## 6. Conclusion

This study aimed to examine the influence of brand image, price, brand trust, attitude, and religiosity on use behavior in the context of imported halal skincare products among Generation Z. The findings reveal that brand image, price, attitude, and religiosity do not have a significant impact on behavioral intention. In contrast, brand

trust shows a significant and positive effect on behavioral intention, emphasizing the importance of consumer confidence in building intention to purchase. Moreover, behavioral intention itself significantly influences actual use behavior, indicating that when Generation Z forms a strong intention, it often leads to tangible purchasing actions.

Based on these results, future researchers are encouraged to explore alternative data collection methods beyond surveys, such as conducting in-depth interviews or direct engagement with consumers. This approach may yield deeper insights into the underlying motivations and perceptions related to behavioral intention and use behavior. Additionally, upcoming studies should consider incorporating other variables, such as the role of digitalization in purchasing behavior, and expand the sample to include larger and more diverse generational cohorts. These enhancements could provide more comprehensive and generalizable insights into consumer behavior in the halal skincare market.

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